

# Atari Connection

ATARI INC., 1265 BORREGAS AVE., SUNNYVALE, CA 94086

VOL. 2, NO. 6 JUNE, 1978

## NEW IMPROVED: MIDDLE EARTH™



Extensive field testing of Atari's MIDDLE EARTH™ pinball game has provided direction for many improvements that have been included in the games now in production. Not only has the earnings potential of Middle Earth proven to be one of the highest on the market today, the serviceability and reliability have been further developed and improved significantly.

Some of the new features now included on this dynamic pinball from Atari include the following:

- New linear flippers with replaceable coils and reinforced flipper buttons are designed and tested for longer life.
- An improved hold down bar that goes on and off for easy serviceability.
- New discrete match credit and score boards.
- New snaplock method of mounting the printed circuit board eliminates the springs and problems caused by vibration.
- New multiple drop targets have been tested to over 1,000,000 cycles without failure.
- New wireforms behind the slingshots will minimize ball trapping.
- New coin switch and actuator wire will eliminate possible faulty coining of free plays.
- New mini posts designed for high resistance to breakage.
- Spinning targets have been redesigned to alleviate sticking.
- Modified star rollovers minimize sticking.

In addition to all of these new features, Middle Earth comes with a new complete illustrated parts

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## FIRE TRUCK™ NOW AVAILABLE

The new and unique Fire Truck™ will add profits to your location. Fire Truck is the first driving game that features exciting teamwork and cooperation of the players as they maneuver the realistic hook and ladder fire truck through city streets and race to the fire. For a complete description of Fire Truck, refer to the May issue of the Coin Connection. This game is sure to be a major attraction. See Fire Truck today at your local Atari distributor's showroom.



## ATARI TEST UNIT AVAILABLE



Atari has developed a portable ROM/RAM Test Unit for simplified troubleshooting in the field or in the service shop. This unit measures only 9" x 6" x 1 1/2" and can be easily set up on location. It will be an extremely useful aid to technicians to quickly pinpoint problem areas on Atari games.

The ROM/RAM Tester can be used on the majority of Atari's microprocessor pinball and video games. It can save many hours of troubleshooting time by enabling a technician to test the ROMs and RAMs on a PC board in just a few minutes. The tester can also be easily used to

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## A NEW LOOK FOR SPRINT 1™



The exciting play action of Sprint 1™ is now available in a dynamic new colorful cabinet design as well as the sleek woodgrain cabinet to add even more location versatility to this high profit game. Three bright red, orange and yellow race cars speeding up the side of the

new cabinet with similar bezel and front plexiglass is sure to attract driving game enthusiasts.

In both cabinet styles this one player driving game offers maximum racing thrills for players. Fast action and challenging features add up to many hours of excitement. Twelve different tracks changing automatically as racers complete each lap, fast acceleration and responsive 4 speed shift controls with skids and crashing intensify the action of Sprint 1. Operator options provide variety and versatility like oil slicks, extended play, game time and coinage. Players will enjoy the realism of "drone" car traffic, sounds of roaring engines and squealing tires and racing responsive controls.

Now there is a choice of two styles to best fit the needs of different operator locations.

## LOCATION TRADE FEATURES GAMES

Two recent location trade magazines have included feature articles on games. **Motel/Motor Inn Journal**, March 1978 issue, featured a story titled "Add Fun for Guests and Profits for You," which discussed in detail the advantages of coin-op games in their establishments and how to select an operator. This was written by Mr. Sanders Lettetter, Business Manager at Texas A & M University, who had experienced the profitability of games at the University Student Center and took the initiative to share his information with a different market. Mr. Lettetter said that he intends to write a similar article for other trade magazines as well.

**Restaurant Business**, April 1978, included a lengthy article on the innovative restaurants owned and operated by Francis Barrett. His restaurants have been reported to have a unique appeal to all ages including both singles and families. The article points out that entertainment is an important factor in the overall appeal of his locations, and specifically states that the Game Room is "a prominent feature" attracting customers.

These articles are excellent for our industry. They help to increase demand for games in more locations as well as contributing to the positive image building for our industry.

## BEHIND THE SCENES: ATARI'S ARTISTS

Atari's games are recognized as having the highest graphic appeal of any in the industry. Eight individuals, comprising the Graphic Design group at Atari, are responsible for this well-deserved unparalleled reputation. A game's graphics play a crucial role in attracting the attention and interest of the players. The Graphic Design team has consistently created dynamic and original designs that make Atari's games stand out in any location. The exceptional creativity of this group is further evidenced by the many ads, brochures, posters, etc., they design for Atari's marketing programs. The eight designers and artists in the Graphics department are valuable behind-the-scenes people at Atari.



Atari's Graphic Team is left to right, Jim Arata, Roger Hector, Steve Hendricks, George Opperman, Gail Van Der Wyk, Bob Flemate, Evelyn Lim, and Jim Kelly.

## PINBALL MARATHON TO HELP CHILDREN



In a fund-raising effort to please over \$5,000 to charity, the Pinball Wizard of Des Moines, Iowa, sponsored a record-breaking pinball marathon. There were over 30 entries at the start of the contest, two of whom lasted over 100 hours, breaking all known records.

The enthusiastic players were trying to raise money for the local Variety Club's drive for handicapped and underprivileged children. Over 2 dozen local businessmen donated hundreds of dollars in cash and prizes that were distributed to contestants according to how long they played and how much money they raised. Each received a pass for free games for each hour they played in the event. A pinball machine was available for each entry. "One of the favorite games mentioned was Atari's Time 2000™," said Dick Gallopay, President of Pinball Wizard.

The response to the marathon was superb. Not only did the Variety Club receive over \$5,000 for the children, but Tim Woods and Chris Epps, both 17, won the top prize: their persistent 100 hour effort. The local news coverage of the event was an additional boost for the game center. It helped to promote public relations and more players' interest.

## TRADE SHOW UPDATE

**Berlin, Germany—International Coin Machine Exposition**



Lowen Automaten, Atari's distributor in Germany, had a special display of Atari games at this International exposition held April 26-29. *Middle Earth™* was featured and attracted much attention. There were daily contests at the show on the new pinball which was one of the highlights of Lowen's dynamic display. Gene Lipkin, head of Atari's Coin-Op Division, attended the show and commented that the response to the Atari products at the show was extremely good.

**Toronto, Canada—Canadian Restaurant-Hotel-Motel Show**  
Atari and New Way Sales exhibited Atari games at the Canadian Restaurant-Hotel-Motel Show. "The response to the games was excellent. *Middle Earth™* especially attracted many of the location representatives. *Sky Raider™* was also one of the more popular games at the show," commented Paul Janda, New Way Sales. "The exposure to these locations and potential for new business from this show is encouraging for the Canadian market," he added. Howie Rubin, Eastern Sales Manager, attended the show as Atari's representative. The high interest in the games at this show is evidence of the industry growth potentials in these areas.

### Chicago, Illinois—National Restaurant Association

Atari will be displaying products at the largest Restaurant and Hotel-Motel show. Over 100,000 location representatives will have the opportunity to play the latest games from Atari and learn more about the profitability of having coin-op games for their customers. Next month **Coin Connection** will report on the response at this show.

## ATARI SERVICE SCHOOLS

Atari's Field Service staff will be conducting technical service schools in the cities listed below throughout June and July. It is recommended that operators in these areas contact their local Atari distributor to confirm the dates and space available, or call Fred McCord, Field Service Manager, at (800) 538-6892.

WHEN	WHERE	SUBJECT
June 5-9	Chicago, IL, Empire Distributing Detroit, MI, Empire Distributing Grand Rapids, MI, Empire Distributing	Pinball Electronics Pinball Electronics Pinball & Video Electronics
June 14	Miami, FL, Belam Florida Corp.	Pinball Electronics
June 19-20	Pittsburgh, PA, Banner Specialty Co.	Pinball & Video Electronics
June 22-23	Baltimore, MD, Banner Specialty Co.	Pinball & Video Electronics
June 22-23	Burnaby, BC, Canada, J. E. Weatherhead Distributing Rowe International of Canada	Pinball & Video Electronics
July 11-13	Des Moines, IA, Philip Moss, Inc. Kansas City, MO, Philip Moss, Inc. Omaha, NB, Philip Moss, Inc.	Pinball Electronics Pinball Electronics Pinball Electronics

## TECHNICAL TIP

### INTERCHANGEABILITY

By Fred McCord, Field Service Manager

So, it's Friday night at the pub and your brand new Atari *Middle Earth™* decides to eat a linear coil. Ops, you don't have an Atari coil in your bag of tricks?? Well, thanks to the efforts of Atari engineers Abid Khan, Larry Banks, and Mark Liszak, the following interchangeability chart should get you out of trouble. Two things are important, however:

- 1) The information is based on current games. Therefore, it is possible that there may be other coils from older equipment that would work. However, without adequate testing on a particular part, we cannot recommend random replacement.
- 2) It is also important that the footnotes be read and heeded.

### INTERCHANGEABILITY\* OF OTHER PINBALL MANUFACTURERS' COILS WITH ATARI DEVICES

\*On all coils listed below (except Bally coil #AQ-25-500/34-5050) diodes must be replaced with IN4006 diodes before installing these coils in Atari machines. Before removing coil from Atari machine identify harness wire connected to coil terminal on the striped (cathode) end of diode. Connect this wire to similar terminal on replacement coil.

ATARI DEVICE	MANUFACTURER / Part Number			
	GOTTLIEB	BALLY	STERN	WILLIAMS
Flipper *	***	AQ-25-500/34-5050 <sup>†</sup>	***	***
Sling Shot	A-5195	AN-26-1200	J-25-1050	G-25-1100
Thumper Bumper	A-5195 <sup>‡</sup>	AN-26-1200 <sup>§</sup>	J-25-1050	G-25-1100
Drop Target	***	***	J-25-1050	G-25-1100

① Not necessary to replace diodes, but the coil is wound opposite therefore when installing it in Atari machine swap the harness wires going to the two outer terminals of the coil. May not be used for an extended period because it is likely to shorten life of the flipper button switch.

② Interchangeable with only Atari part no. A020470-01 (Orange wrapper) coil. DO NOT REPLACE the retrofit flipper coil (Red wrapper) Atari part no. A020498-01 with any other coil.

③ Thumper Bumper action will be noticeably weak.

\*\* DO NOT USE—Tested and found unacceptable for use in Atari machines.

## PROMOTION IDEA: DIRECT MAIL CONTEST

Send out a postcard contest to the community. The contest should be somewhat simple: a word game using the names of games, a maze, or riddles are some suggestions. To enter, the completed card should be brought to your location. You can offer a free game for each card received as a bonus. Correct entries can be put in a barrel for a prize drawing on a specified date.

Mailing lists for this contest can be obtained from local youth groups, school or church organizations. If you get over 300 names, the mailing can be sent by bulk mail.

This promotion idea can be implemented for as little as \$75 to \$100 and is certain to bring new players to your location. Also, you can notify the community newspapers to try to get news coverage on your unique contest.

## NBC PINBALL

NBC (National Broadcasting Corporation) has its own animated pinball game, "The NBC Fun Machine." Actually, this is a TV ad which is run during their children's programming. It is very creative — showing the ball shooting onto the playfield, hitting bumpers and going through the spinner as the copy shows the Fun Machine. This is an excellent boost for pinball games having the image of FUN. Our industry owes thanks to NBC for their clever use of the pinball in their programming. Next time you have an opportunity to watch Saturday morning TV, look for the NBC Fun Machine.

## FROM THE EDITOR: POSITIVE PUBLICITY

Thank you for the many requests we have received for the Positive Publicity Package. An additional thanks to those of you who have sent more positive articles to include in the package. The number of requests have been much higher than expected; if you have not yet received the package it should be in the mail soon.

We hope that this package of positive news articles will be of value to you in your business. Please write and let us know if and how it has been beneficial. We need your inputs to evaluate the package. Atari wants to continue to provide this type of support to our customers to help the industry continue to grow in a positive way. We would like your suggestions on other information you would like us to include in future updates of this package.

If you would like the Positive Publicity Package and have not yet requested one, please write to me, Carol Kantor, Editor, **Coin Connection**, at Atari.

*Middle Earth (Continued)*  
catalog for simplified reference when ordering parts.

"Atari has implemented all of these changes based on reports from our distributors and operators. Our goals are to build the best pinball games in the market," said Frank Ballouz. "With these improvements, we are confident that Middle Earth will continue its outstanding performance as well as showing significant improvements in its reliability and serviceability."

*Test Unit (Continued)*

test each function on a game to define where a specific problem can be found.

This unique testing unit is plugged into the microprocessor after the microprocessor chip is removed. The unit will simulate the functions of this chip while testing the game. It allows for checking each function of the game separately.

ROM and RAM memory components are quickly checked. A ROM, RAM or PROM that is working correctly can be plugged into the test unit and compared to the one on the board to determine if there is a problem. To test the other functions of the game, a reference of address codes or "memory maps" for each game is provided. As the switches on the tester are changed to the address of each function, that circuit is checked and any problems will appear either on the video screen, the playfield on a pinball, or on the test unit itself.

This unit can be a valuable tool for technicians to quickly test circuits and components on the PC board. It is a supplement to the self-test program and can be used if the built-in test program is not operating. Atari's ROM/RAM Tester is available through Atari distributors for under \$300. For further information, contact your distributor, or Atari Customer Service: California office (800) 538-1611 or New Jersey office (800) 631-5374.

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